

Local Church Profile for Churches Seeking an Interim Pastor

Church Information

Full Name: Trinitarian Congregational Church
Address: 54 Walden Street, Concord, MA 01742
Phone: 978-369-4837
Website: <http://www.triconchurch.org/>

Additional Denominational Affiliations: None

UCC Conference: Southern New England
Association: Metropolitan Boston Association
Area Conference Minister Name: Alex Shea Will
ACM phone: 508-244-4769
ACM email: sheawilla@sneucc.org

Position Details

In a paragraph or two for each item, please answer the following prompts.

1. Describe the ministry position for which you are seeking a pastor.

The Trinitarian Congregational Church (TriCon) in Concord, MA was established in 1826 and has grown into a dynamic, intergenerational church. Our Church is an ecumenical community of faith in the tradition of the United Church of Christ. We strive to continue to be an inclusive, open, and affirming congregation. Our vision statement says God is calling us to be a nurturing community of faith that honors God through service and mission.

We have a lay leadership that is committed to keeping our church strong. We tend to be an enthusiastic, intelligent congregation with strong opinions (that we don't always voice).

With our Senior Minister's upcoming retirement, we are seeking an Interim Minister to start January 23, 2023, to serve until a settled minister is called by the congregation. The successful candidate must have prior transition experience with a large, open, and affirming church as s/he/them will shepherd us through this discernment process. The Interim's specific responsibilities will incorporate the following: provide guidance to the Search Committee; preaching on Sunday mornings three times per month, and at special services as the need arises;

pastoral care visitation and support; spiritual development in collaboration with the Christian Education Committee; and Mission (adult and family outreach work). Administrative tasks will include staff support and management in co-ordination with our Minister of Congregational Life, and regular monthly meetings with the Church Council and Diaconate.

2. Name 3 core competencies that you feel you will need in your Interim Pastor.

1. Skill in helping the congregation discern the post-pandemic role of the church in its life, with particular attention devoted to attracting younger families looking for a robust spiritual community.
2. Preaching competency and vibrancy in the pulpit.
3. An understanding of, and experience with, leading a large, multi-staff church through the day-to-day function as well as through the transition in leadership.

3. What aspects of the 5 tasks of interim ministry (listed in the instructions sheet) do you anticipate being the focus of your interim time?

- a. **Discovering a new identity** – As Tri-Con adjusts to a new rhythm following the Pandemic, which has challenged every aspect of our church, how do we shape and expand the role of the church to attract and address the intergenerational spiritual and religious needs of those in our broader community?
- b. **Shift of power/leadership changes** -- Our church has lost vitality in the last few years. The pandemic impacted leadership involvement and concurrently we experienced less engaged and inspiration from our senior minister. Nonetheless, we have retained a strong core of committed leaders. We recently reinstituted monthly Church Council meetings. Our hope as we move forward with a change in ministry is to reengage those members who stepped away from leadership roles the last few years and/or are not serving on committees, volunteering to run specific events or attending worship services.

Additionally, we hope this will be a time to thoughtfully consider the current duties of the clergy positions at TriCon, to ensure that we optimize the talents of each minister, as well as provide the best service to our congregation.

Finally, we hope to take this interim opportunity to closely examine the organizational structure of our staff and committees with the objective of improving communication, decision making, and role clarity.

- c. **Commitment to new leadership and to a new future** -- Our greatest hope, which we believe will address many of our current concerns, is that we draw younger members with young families into our community, to join us in worship and to assume leadership roles in our church, to rebuild a vibrant, intergenerational congregation.

We are aware that the role of regular Sunday worship, and church in general, in people's lives is changing. Although we tend to be a traditional church, we are open to new possibilities to gather people together in person and address their faith needs.

4. Position Scope: ☒ Full-time ☐ 3/4 time ☐ 1/2 time ☐ 1/4 time

5. Position Duration: ☒ 12 months ☐ 18 months other

Who We Are

In a paragraph or two for each item, please provide the following.

1. Church's Mission Statement:

We are an open and affirming community of faith in the United Church of Christ that honors God through service and mission.

2. Brief Church History:

With their tall steeples, New England's picturesque churches dominate town centers; their presence is a testament to the importance of church to the life of the early settlers and to ours today. Our church is quintessentially New England, with roots in the First Church, established in Concord by the earliest settlers in 1636.

In 1826, a small group broke away from the First Church to confirm their belief in the Trinity and to establish our church. From the beginning, the church engaged in the issues of the times. Within 10 years, formal resolutions stated the congregation's "solid stance against slavery" and members were actively involved in assisting run-away slaves. Today we continue the tradition of compassionate concern through our strong commitment to mission and outreach.

The original meeting house was extensively renovated in 1898, resulting in a Victorian structure with a corner steeple and stained-glass windows. In 1924, that church building was leveled in a devastating fire. The congregation celebrated its 100th anniversary as a new church building rose from the ashes.

A growing Church School population necessitated the addition of a church school wing in 1956 and in 2001, a major renovation and expansion was completed to make our facility fully accessible and to accommodate the many functions and activities of our busy parish.

3. 2-3 Significant Events:

The most noteworthy events in our recent history involve the Senior Minister position. In 2016, closely following a six-month sabbatical, our then Senior minister, John Lombard, chose to retire. The subsequent search process took two years to complete. Bob Brown, the then current Associate Minister, requested to be considered for the Senior Minister position. Against UCC guidance, we decided to consider his candidacy, and ultimately offered him the position. Reverend Brown was voted in, but a significant portion of our members remained uncomfortable with his leadership.

Certainly, COVID has had a tremendous impact on our church. As a large and active congregation, not being able to be together was beyond difficult. The church building was effectively closed for a year. The staff did a magnificent job of creating and offering services on-line during the pandemic but for many members and friends Zoom worship simply did not meet their needs. Coming out of the pandemic, we have struggled to draw members and friends to church for services and to re-engage with programming at the pre-pandemic levels.

Rev. Brown's decision to leave TriCon has also been a significant event in our history. The congregation certainly wishes him well. We are optimistic that through this transition we will be able to revitalize the church by attracting current and new members to become engaged in our new journey.

4. Church Strengths:

Tri-Con is blessed with considerable strengths. We are a welcoming community to all. We are spiritually creative and curious in our programming to all ages. We offer a wide array of caring ministries for constituents to engage in. We have dynamic and historically strong children and teen programming, including an annual senior high mission trip. We are committed stewards within our local community and globally. Our annual mission budget represents a serious commitment to food assistance, environmental protection, racial justice, homelessness, and educational opportunity. Our music program is rich and plays a significant role in the life of our church. We care, nurture, celebrate and have fun with one another.

5. Church Challenges:

As many churches post-pandemic, we are working to readjusting as a community of faith. We recognize the need to attracting new, younger families to participate in our church community. We are continuing to discuss and work toward how we can better provide for our current and

new members, a place to grow in faith. We continue to work towards building a more robust, ongoing, and hands-on mission program, which involves all ages and abilities.

6. Experience of Conflict:

1. Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. On a scale of 1-5, where would you rank your church's level of conflict?

1. Problem to solve 2. Disagreement 3. Contest 4. Fight or Flight 5. Intractable

2. Please explain why you chose this level.

Many of the members of our congregation are corporate professionals who are used to employing problem solving strategies to new or challenging situations. Another dynamic at work among us is that we have grown accustomed to holding back criticism out of respect for our long-standing staff members.

3. Describe your congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict.

We value sharing our many ideas and opinions openly and freely. We value transparency and open dialogue, although some members feel they are not heard or may fail to express their opinions. We offer open forums and meetings to discuss challenges and encourage input from the congregation at large. At times, it is unclear who has the authority to make decisions, or that some have an excessive amount of influence.

Basic Church Statistics

Yearly average

	Church Membership	Weekly Worship Attendance	Children & Youth Participation	Adult Group Participation
Pre-pandemic	581	160	100	100+
Current year	537 (2021)	120	80	80

	Income	Overall Budget	Mission Giving	Reserves& Endowment Principals
Pre-pandemic	\$1,067,320	\$1,088,800	\$156,550	\$4,308,621
Current year	\$1,026,300	\$1,016,300	\$128,222	\$5,364,164

Compensation

Total Compensation Package Amount or Range: \$105,000 - \$115,000

Package offered: X Total Package, no additional monetary benefits offered
(Choose only one) _____ Total Package includes optional benefits to be negotiated (if you wish,
list here what those optional benefits may be)

Housing:

☒ Housing allowance only
☐ Parsonage only
☐ Either Parsonage or Housing Allowance Provided

Church body responsible for hiring the Interim Pastor: Moderator, Vice Moderator, Chair of the Diaconate and Chair of the Personnel Committee

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Statement of Consent

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this document that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates. As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending a suitable leader for the interim time for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates.

We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

Charity Tremblay/Vice Moderator

December 4, 2022

Signature of Search Committee Chairperson
(Typed or Jpeg is sufficient)

Date